

Wimbish Church Newsletter



February/March 2026



**Wimbish and Debden Parish Churches
Church Services and Events in February/March
2026**



Services subject to change:
please check websites

www.achurchnearyou.com/church/19645/

All Saints, Wimbish

Sunday 1st February: Candlemas

9.30 am Village Worship (Home Team) Coffee served after service)

Sunday 15th February: Sunday before Lent

10.30 am Holy Communion (Rev Lynda Sebbage)

Sunday 1st March: Lent 2

9.30 am Village Worship (Home Team) Coffee served after service)

Sunday 15th March: Lent 4

10.30 am Mothering Sunday with Holy Communion (Rev Lynda Sebbage)

St Mary The Virgin, Debden

Sunday 8th February: Second before Lent

9.00 am Holy Communion (Rev Lynda Sebbage)

Wednesday 18th February: Ash Wednesday

8.00 pm Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes (Rev Lynda Sebbage)

Sunday 22nd February: Lent 1

9.00 am Parish Praise (Home Team)

Sunday 8th March: Lent 3

9.00 am Holy Communion (Rev Lynda Sebbage)

Sunday 15th March: Lent 4

9.00 am Mothering Sunday with Holy Communion (Rev Lynda Sebbage)

Sunday 29th March: Palm Sunday

10.00 am Palm Sunday Service with the Passion narrative

St Mary's, Saffron Walden

Sunday 22nd March: Lent 5

10.30 am Team service St Marys Saffron Walden

Wimbish Parish Church, Off Maple Lane, CB10 2XG
St Paul's Mission Hall, Wimbish Tye Green, CB10 2XE (next to Wimbish School)
Debden Parish Church, Church Lane, CB11 3LD

The copy deadline for the April/May newsletter is 10th March 2026.
wimbishparishmagazine@gmail.com

The views and opinions expressed in articles published in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editorial committee or of the Wimbish Parochial Church Council (PCC). Editor's decision is final.

LETTER FROM THE RECTORY:

February brings with it Valentine's Day, a moment in the year when many people, in all sorts of ways, try to show their love and appreciation for someone else. Shops overflow with heart-shaped chocolates, bright red cards, and gifts designed to express affection. It always makes me think of those Love is... cartoons—perhaps you remember them too. A few I came across recently made me smile: Love is... caring more for one another each day. Love is... when your heart does the talking. Or even, Love is... counting your blessings.

Love matters. Popular culture reminds us of this again and again—whether it's the idea that "love is a many-splendoured thing," the claim that "all you need is love," or the belief that "love makes the world go round." The early 20th century psychologist, Abraham Maslow, placed love among one of the key basic human needs: to flourish, we must both love and be loved.

Scripture goes much further. Jesus teaches that the greatest commandment is to love God with all our heart, soul, and strength—and to love our neighbour as ourselves. In 1 Corinthians 13, that well-known wedding reading, Paul describes love as the most essential of God's gifts. Without love, he says, everything else loses its meaning. His letter to the Corinthians speaks not of romantic gestures or chocolates and flowers, but of God's unconditional, sacrificial love—the love that we are called to share with one another.

He writes that love is patient and kind; it is not jealous or boastful, arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way, nor does it keep a record of wrongs. Love rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love is what gives life its depth and purpose. Without it, even the most impressive achievements ring hollow.

This year, on 18th February, is Ash Wednesday and the start of Lent, and we have a rather special service that is held in the chancel at St Mary's in Debden. I wonder if you would like to join us? It really is very moving and those who come along for this short reflective time when we receive the mark of the cross on our foreheads and share in the bread and wine, have all commented just how special it is for them.

During Lent, many of us will think about what we might give up. Personally, I like to turn this around and consider what we could give instead—how we might bless others, offering small acts of kindness that make God's love visible in our daily lives. Jesus calls us to love one another. Imagine how different our world could be if we truly lived that out.

As the great Christian writer, C.S. Lewis once said, "He loved us not because we are lovable, but because He is love."

Reverend Lynda
Debden Rectory

A View From The Fly On The Church Wall

Well, here we are in February already, but Christmas seems just five minutes ago. Yet Easter (5th April) is just around the corner, especially if you look at what's on sale in the shops. Where does the time go? (I must be getting old!).

All the Christmas services were well attended, the weather being particularly kind (sorry, no snow). It's always a joy to sing along at the Carol Service, the choir being in very good voice.

The Crib Service on Christmas Eve was a great chance for families to have a quiet time together whilst following the Christmas story. The children were eager to place the figures into the stable, creating a somewhat crowded tableau.

The story, 'The Light is Bright' was then enacted by children and adults alike. I'm not sure who was the more enthusiastic, the children or the adults. This obviously wasn't the quiet bit. Great fun!

The midnight service on Christmas Eve was beautifully led by Reverend Chris Pemberton. A lovely quiet holy hour in our lovely church, celebrating the Birth of Jesus.

The collection from these services will be going to

Crisis at Christmas	£135
The Food Bank	£135
Wimbish Church	£135

Many thanks to all who contributed, especially as the financial climate continues to be challenging. I'm always humbled by people's generosity.

Although I've been grumbling about time flying by (big birthday coming up) I am looking forward to Easter - especially the waiting period - Lent. The church is holding 'Outside for Lent' for the third year, as it has proved popular. Last year's subjects were trees, birds, insects and anything green. It is great to be amongst nature in our lovely churchyard. This year's theme is still nature, but through the medium of Art, Music and Poetry. Taking place on the 4th, 18th and 25th March. I, for one, can't wait.

Our once a month 'Tea and Chat' at St Paul's is a way of keeping in contact with fellow villages while drinking tea and eating cake. Although initially formed from the disbanded 'good companions', other people have come along and enjoyed the friendly atmosphere. Do pop along for tea, cake and a chat on the first Monday of the month. 2-4 pm Everyone is welcome.

Peter
Churchwarden.

Wimbish Coffee Mornings

St Paul's Mission Hall



14th February, 14th March. 10 to 11.30am

Coffee, tea, soft drinks plus delicious home-made cakes and bakes.

Cake Stall, Produce and Preserves for sale.

We also have a selection of pre-loved items for sale and great prizes in our raffle.

All Welcome!

DEBDEN CHURCH MICE

Church Mice meet monthly on a Thursday from 1.45-2.315 pm,

Thursday 26th February (held in the school)
"Walking with Jesus"

Thursday 26th March (held in the church)
"The Easter Story"

Ideal for under 5s with parents/grandparents/carers.

For more information please contact Reverend Lynda 01799 796193



TEA AND CHAT AT ST PAUL'S

Meets the first Monday afternoon of the month 2 - 4 pm
Come along to the warm and friendly environment of St Paul's
Mission Room for chat, games, puzzles and activities
Refreshments provided.



Monday 2nd February - Poetry reading with Anthony Wordsworth
and Paula Griffiths

Monday 2nd March - 'Olive's Memories' Olive Smith will be talking about living and
growing up in Wimbish.

Worship and Word Prayer Group, St Paul's, Wimbish

This is a short informal time of prayer and reflection around the daily office service of Evening Prayer. We include prayer for each other, the life of the churches, the needs of those from around the world, and of course for those we hold dear. You are welcome to join us, with no expectation to pray aloud.

5.00 - 5.45 pm on Wednesday 4th February

No services in March

For prayer requests please contact Peter Gray 07901 946440

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Come and join us!

1st Debden Brownies
For girls aged 7 to 10



We meet at
Debden Village Hall
on Wednesdays 5 - 6.30 pm
Contact: Anne Bannister
1stdebdenbrownies@gmail.com
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toebeanscr@gmail.com
Tel: 07436 285029

Get Outside For Lent

Wimbish Church
Wednesday's 4th, 18th, 25th March
10 - 11 am

Lent offers us a time to reflect and contemplate. This year we are using music, art and poetry as a stimulus. During these sessions we will have the opportunity to explore Wimbish church and grounds.

Refreshments will be provided.
All welcome.
Come and 'be present' in nature.



For more information contact
Pete Gray: 07901 946440 or email
petewgray@hotmail.co.uk

ASH WEDNESDAY



SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION
WITH
THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

18 FEBRUARY 2026
8PM

DEBDEN CHURCH

Mothering Sunday

Sunday, 15th March 2026

Debden Church

at 9am

Wimbish Church

at 1030am

A special service for all
who share in God's creation.
Everyone is welcome!





Easter Services

Sunday 29th March: Palm Sunday

10.00 am Debden Palm Sunday Service with the Passion narrative

2nd April: Maundy Thursday

7.30 pm Wimbish Mission Hall Agape Supper

3rd April: Good Friday

10.00 am Debden Stations of the Cross

3rd April: Good Friday

2.00 pm Wimbish Hour at the Cross

5th April: Easter Sunday

10.30 am Wimbish Holy Communion

5th April: Easter Sunday

9.00 am Debden Holy Communion

'Chair Boogie' Classes

Mondays 1.40 pm Wimbish School

Seated activities for all. Free to attend. Runs all year. Stay afterwards for free refreshments.

(Please note change of day)

for more information please contact active@touchpoint.org



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Please get in touch if you would like further information:

Chroma House, Shire Hill, Saffron Walden, Essex
CB11 3AQ

Jodiereid@saffronsupportltd.co.uk
Tel: 07966292650

Louisestokley@saffronsupportltd.co.uk
Tel: 07711967344

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ECO CHURCH

Winter Recording

We often think there isn't much in the way of wildlife or plants to see in wintertime but look more closely and you will see lots of lichens filling bare tree and hedgerow branches (and other substrates too).

Lichens are an odd taxon. They are a symbiotic relationship between fungi and algae, and the occasional yeast. They are always named after the fungi. They can take years to grow. There are different forms of lichen; crustose, foliose and fruiticose.

Chewing Gum Lichen (*Protoparmeliopsis muralis*) is a very common crustose type of lichen. You will find it on pavements or concrete. They like substrate enriched with nitrogen. Maritime sunburst lichen (*Xanthoria parietina*) is another very common, pollution tolerant lichen. This is the mustard yellow lichen seen on hedgerows and trees along field edges and roads. It is a foliose type (leafy type).

The last type is fruiticose, lichens which hold on to the substrate by one single point known as a holdfast. The most commonly found is the Farinose cartilage lichen (*Ramalina farinacea*). Look for a silvery grey-green dangling lichen (about 3-6cm long). Again, this can be found on branches and sometimes on rocks.

There is also a family of lichens called Cladonia, which mainly sits in the fruiticose type. These are notoriously difficult to identify to species level. They are very pretty though, with the most eye-catching having red fruiting bodies, colloquially known as Pixie cups. These take a bit more work to find due to pollution tolerance.

If you are interested in finding out more about lichens, have a look at The British Lichen Society's website <https://britishlichensociety.org.uk/> They hold a free beginners course by Zoom every autumn.

Frogs in winter

Now is the best time to look for frogspawn. Frogs (*Rana temporaria*) are not too fussy about where they lay their eggs. Frogs create large clumps of spawn (toads form strings of eggs instead). Eggs can be found in ponds, wet ditches and even in puddles!

The frog breeding season runs from late January until April, with peak activity in February and March depending upon how far north they live. The weather plays a big part in their life cycle. Mild and damp weather can bring spawning dates forward. They often return to the water body they were born in, so filling in known frog ponds is not advised. The RSPB are running a scheme to find ghost ponds – ponds which were filled in many years ago- to help with frog populations. While they are classified as Least Concern by the IUCN, they do suffer from local declines. Frogs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) in the UK.

Wimbish is one area where there are very few frogs, and the Essex Amphibian and Reptile Group (EARG) gave advice on how to establish populations there. Some froglets were donated from Debden two years ago to help this project.

One issue is that frogs are food for most other animals. As frogspawn and tadpoles, they provide a nutritious meal for water birds, newts, fish and pond invertebrates. As froglets and adults they are prey for many mammals and birds including birds of prey and owls.

If you have frogspawn in your pond please record it. The Freshwater Habitat Trust run the PondNet survey which asks for sightings of frogspawn between December and May each year. Sightings can be logged on the following link <https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/advice-resources/survey-methods-hub/pondnet-spawn-survey/>

Fiona Hutchings

In and Around Wimbish

WIMBISH WALKERS

Meets on the second Sunday of the month. Walks in Wimbish, or exploring the surrounding villages. Join us for a walk around some of the local footpaths.

Contact: Penny Browne pennybrowne@hotmail.com

<https://www.wimbish.org.uk/wimbish-walkers.html>

WIMBISH PARISH COUNCIL

Meets the first Wednesday of each month at the Village Hall

<https://www.wimbish.org.uk/wimbish-parish-council-contacts.html>

WIMBISH CHURCH WEBSITE

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/19645/>

WIMBISH VILLAGE HALL

Capacity is 120 standing or 80 seated.

Cost of Hire: £15.00 per hour, or £75 per day.

Contact: Edward Browne 07974704138.

RADWINTER W.I.

Meets the last Wednesday of the month

Contact: Wendy Rowley 01799 599753

CRAFTERNOON

Do you knit, crochet, or sew? Why not join others for an afternoon of craft. Crafternoon meets on the third Monday of the month at St Paul's Mission Hall. 2 - 4pm

Refreshments provided. Contact: Yvonne reynoldsonyoung@gmail.com

TEA AND CHAT AT ST PAUL'S

Come along to the warm and friendly environment of St Paul's for chat, games, puzzles, activities. **Refreshments provided.**

Meets the first Monday afternoon of the month at St Paul's Mission Hall 2 - 4 pm. All Welcome.

CHAIR BOOGIE CLASSES

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For more information: 07572 114882. active@thetouchpoint.org

Janet remembers...Past Residents of Wimbish

From time to time I have been asked if I can remember who lived where years ago and I have tried to put my recollections in some sort of order. I can only start from early childhood and school.

I'll start at the old police houses on Thaxted Road, where two policemen were in residence and patrolled the village on bicycles. They kept a close eye on the village boys, who avoided them as far as possible. Down the hill on the right was a very pretty cottage where Mr Jupp the chapel parson, lived with his wife. This was later demolished when the road was widened.

Heading along Thaxted Road past the Elder Street turning at the top of the hill, the thatched property on the left, Rowney Cottage, is where Mrs Ruse lived with her daughter Marion. Opposite at the beginning of Pepples Lane there is Rowney Corner Farmhouse where Jack McQueen lived with his daughter Margaret, who will be remembered as a very capable lady who worked on the farm. She regularly played the organ in church, her favourite piece being Handel's Largo in G. The house on the opposite corner (now Leveretts) was Brick House, a red brick house with a large adjoining barn and petrol pump – it was the garage belonging to Mr A. H. Brooks. Moving across the road continuing towards Thaxted, there is Walnut Tree Cottage, where Mr and Mrs Thorogood lived with their son Jacky, who came to Wimbish school. Mrs Thorogood did housework for Mrs Hallett, who was headmistress at the school. Next there was the White Hart, once a flourishing pub presided over by Mrs Jeffery and family. I recall a boy called Bernard living there who also came to Wimbish school.

Further along towards Thaxted on the righthand side there is Gowers Farm, where Mary Marshall lived with her grandparents and also attended the local school. Next to the farm is thatched Gowers Cottage where Jack Wright the blacksmith lived with his wife. He had a barn with his forge and workshop, where his work included shoeing horses. He was known for not wanting to use money for transactions, preferring a basket of apples or potatoes etc. Next to his forge is a pond that overflowed across the road in bad weather (and still does). Opposite the pond where there are now two bungalows, was the home of Oliver Taylor, the (steam) engine man, who lived there with his wife and daughters, the youngest of whom, Peggy, was in a class above me at school. She had beautiful black hair worn in long ringlets, which the boys who sat behind her loved to dip in the inkwells! I don't know who lived at the next bungalow along, but beyond that is the footpath to Mill Road. Beside it is a semi-detached cottage where Will and Julia Gilder lived, with Ida and Will Swan next door, until they moved to their little house further along Thaxted Road.

Then next along there is the Post Office and General Stores, kept by Mr and Mrs Buck. Opposite were several large sheds used for storage, a workshop and the 'killing shed' where animals were brought for slaughter, also a small cottage where an old cobbler lived with his housekeeper, Mrs Burrows and her daughters. That cottage was in a poor state of repair and after the cobbler died Mrs Burrows was moved to one of the new flats (The Leys) which are next to the village hall – the cottage fell down shortly afterwards and all traces of it have now disappeared.

Janet Swan

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Wimbish Parish Council

The 22nd Wimbish Annual Litter Pick Sunday 22nd March 2-4pm

As in previous years the Parish Council will be organising teams that will each cover a different area of the Parish, starting at approximately 2pm.

If you would like to help please contact:

Tracy Coston 01223 894462
Ted Browne 07974 704138
or Mike Young 01799 599089

...to arrange which area you will cover.

Children are welcome but only to tidy up the recreation ground please. High visibility jackets, pickers and bags will be available but you will need to bring gloves.

Afterwards we will all meet up at the Village Hall for tea and cakes at 4pm.

Wimbish Bus Information

<https://bustimes.org/localities/wimbish>

Mobile Post Office Van - Carver Barracks Stop

The Finchingfield Mobile Post Office van calls at Broad Oakes Close, Carver Barracks, CB10 2YJ every Tuesday. 11.00am -11.30pm.

THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY

www.hundredparishes.org.uk

The walk descriptions that can be downloaded from The Hundred Parishes website refer to many interesting buildings along each route. Some of the larger and more ancient homes are described as hall houses, having been constructed as a communal hall with one or two wings at the side. The hall would have been heated by a log fire in the centre of the room, its smoke drifting upwards through vents in the roof.

The hall house design fell out of favour, mainly during the period 1550 to 1650 AD, when it became fashionable to instal a fireplace against a wall, complete with a flue or chimney which took away the smoke and also provided an upward draft to encourage the fire to burn.

Where the flue or chimney breached the roofline, it often continued upwards as a chimney pot. In grander houses, these became fashionable accessories and a good number survive today.

During the 19th century, more and more houses had fires and now they tended to be fuelled by coal. Chimneys became narrower and their pots were less ornate. Fireplaces would be installed in multiple rooms, so houses might have several chimneys.

From mid-20th century, open fires were largely replaced by various forms of central heating and chimney pots are not usually required on new houses. Older pots are sometimes removed before they need maintenance.

You are encouraged to look up at our surviving chimney pots, especially those from long ago. Here are some of the wonderful local examples: Badynghams at Great Waltham; Tudor House in Newport; Cable Cottage in Puckeridge; Brook House at North End, Felsted and Stansted Hall in Stansted Mountfitchet. Not so easy to find, but on various walk routes: Moyns Park in Steeple Bumpstead, Broadoaks in Wimbish, and Dynes Cottage in Finchingfied. Happy spotting!

Ken McDonald, Secretary



Broadoaks, Wimbish



Badynghams, Great Waltham

A belated Happy New Year from everyone at Wimbish Primary Academy!

Just before we broke up for Christmas, we took the whole school to the newly refurbished Cambridge Arts Theatre to see Sleeping Beauty. In the words of the children, 'It was the best day ever!'

We were treated to the most amazing performance of Sleeping Beauty. From the costumes to the stage design, to the acting, singing and dancing, we just didn't know where to look first. The storyline was magical and the children literally all shouted, danced and laughed their way through the 2 hour performance. The adults spent a lot of the time not watching the stage, but instead watching the faces of the children. The awe and wonder and pure delight on their faces made all of the work we have undertaken to raise the money to go so worthwhile and it was a fantastic way to finish the Autumn term.

When we came back to school in January, we started the Spring term with as much excitement as we ended the Autumn term as we had snow! The children had a wonderful time at break and lunch playing in the snow, making snow angels, building snowmen and of course having snow ball fights! We also spent time identifying and following the numerous animal tracks in the snow around our grounds to see which animals we had and where they were. We identified rabbits, muntjac, foxes, pheasants and badgers.

If you are interested in supporting your local community and would be interested in a conversation about becoming a school governor, then please do get in touch. There are 5 meetings across the school year and it is a great way to be actively involved in the local community whilst also supporting your local school.

Nichola Pickford
Executive Head



Peter's Musings February 2026

I was never very good at art during my school years. Not because I wasn't interested, but because I was determined to combine all the primary colours — which, as you can imagine, always produced some shade of brown, usually dark or even darker. This limited my artistic repertoire to tree trunks or ploughed fields!

Cooking went much the same way. I tended to throw in most of the herbs from my garden and half the spices from my rack, whatever I was making. No Michelin stars for me. The result is that my wife does the cooking while I stick to the prep... and then put my feet up to watch the footie.

It struck me recently that this habit of combining everything at hand mirrors my churchmanship to a degree. I've engaged with most of the Christian churches in and around Saffron Walden. That's all well and good, but it doesn't lead to a strong connection with any one church. What it has made me realise is how fortunate we are to have such a variety of churches to choose from — each one suited to different people, rather like parsley with plaice or rosemary with lamb.

Some churches are organised and traditional; others have guitars and drums and a bit more interaction; some are deeply meditative. Yet the unchanging characteristic in each is the same: faith in Jesus, a generosity of spirit, and a warm welcome. There's no test to pass, no requirement to feel worthy, and not even a need to arrive with faith fully formed — that often comes later.

What is true for all, both old-comers and newcomers alike, is that lives can be transformed, purpose rediscovered, and a new freedom found in the Divine. As Luke's Gospel promises:

"I bring you good news that will cause great joy for ALL people."

Peter Sebbage



TouchPoint

Food Share

The community foodshare is for absolutely everyone in the community: it's all about reducing the amount of food that ends up in landfill! We collect good, surplus produce from local supermarkets and retailers, and distribute it in our community. The food includes meat, fruit and veg, bakery items and more.

This foodshare takes place at **Wimbish Primary School, Mondays from 2.45pm to 3.15pm**. Runs all year, even during school holidays.

Come and help to reduce food waste, and perhaps try something new – you never know what you might find! **Please bring a bag.**



District Councillor's Report

Dear all,

2025 was a difficult year from April to December for me health wise but I am please to report I think all of that is behind me now. The NHS has done a good job and my normal service to you will be resumed from now on.

There seem to be some concerns regarding planning applications in Wimbish. I think I can generalise and remark that Wimbish is not in favour of change or new houses.

That said I was pleased to see that there are discussions ongoing about "community benefit". I take it from that that if Solar energy provided money whereby the village got free energy and/or an income from solar farms so the residents didn't need to pay tax things might change.

As an elected member of UDC it would seem to me that UDC and Parish Councils are the last evidence of Democracy it this country. WE stick to the rules and residents know where they stand. That's not true anymore elsewhere. Take Essex CC as an example. You and I can report problems regarding Highways but little gets done. We have potholes all over my Ward that are dangerous, road signs have rusted and fallen to the ground and not replaced. White lines are worn out at junctions so that it is not clear what the priorities are for road users. This is all eroding safety for residents and nobody is accountable. I put it to a Parish council member recently and they remarked you always have the option of protesting by withholding your taxes but how many want to do that. It would be very interesting to know. I for one don't think we are getting value for our money and there is no accountability anymore.

On a similar tack you may have seen reports about the progress of the Essex Local Government Reorganisation that UDC were told it would be best to work towards.

We found that our elections were postponed in May 2025 by ECC who retain control without accountability and continue to pedal their view using our money to produce mailshots and videos that that suggest 3 new councils are better than the 5 that the majority of us in Essex Districts recommended to the Government.

Now they tell us the timeline on LGR has gone wrong so the planned election of a new mayor to take over the job of the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner in May 2026 won't go ahead and a decision as to whether we will be able to vote for our Essex Councillors in May 2026 is also in doubt.

Who is running this mess is not easily approachable and certainly it seems not accountable. Cllr Foley does his best but I think he would admit its not good enough.

If you have any views I would like to see some expressed.

Kind regards Stewart Luck

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We meet on the 1st & 3rd Weds of each month usually around 7.30pm

What is Round Table?

We are just a group of everyday lads who get out once or twice a month and try new things. Aged everywhere between 18 to 45

We fundraise for local causes and run events for the community including the annual Saffron Walden Fireworks Display and every 3 years we run the 8 Day Weekend (Town carnival) event

No funny handshakes, no entry criteria. Just a group of guys looking to get out of the house and do more!

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